

Message Text

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SUBJ: FIRST MEETING OF BOARD FOR WMO'S NORTH ATLANTIC OCEAN STATION
AGREEMENT (NAOS)

REF: GENEVA 9076

1. ALL 14 CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE NAOS AGREEMENT TOOK
PART IN THIS FIRST SESSION OF THE BOARD AT WMO HEADQUARTERS
DEC 13-16, 1976. THESE PARTIES ARE: DENMARK, FINLAND,
FRANCE, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, ICELAND, IRELAND,
NETHERLANDS, NORWAY, SPAIN, SWEDEN, SWITZERLAND, TUNISIA,
USSR AND UNITED KINGDOM. RATIFICATION BY SPAIN BROUGHT THE
AGREEMENT INTO FORCE ON 1 DEC 1976, WHEN THE TOTAL
SUPPORT FOR THE OPERATIONS REACHED 81.3 PERCENT. THREE OF THE FOUR
VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTORS (CZECHOSLOVAKIA, POLAND AND GDR)
PARTICIPATED, AS DID ITALY, BELGIUM AND YUGOSLAVIA. ITALY
AND UYGOSLAVIA STATED THAT THEY EXPECT TO RATIFY THE AGREE-
MENT EARLY IN 1977; BELGIUM WAS NONCOMMITTAL. DR R. BERG-
GREN (SWEDEN) WAS ELECTED PRESIDENT THROUGH DEC 1977.

2. THE MAJOR PROBLEMS FACING THE BOARD WERE TO AGREE
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ON THE OPERATING COSTS AND ON THE SCALE OF CONTRIBUTIONS.
MOST OF THE DEBATE CENTERED AROUND THE OPERATING COSTS
PRESENTED BY THE SIX OPERATORS (FRANCE, NETHERLANDS,
NORWAY, SWEDEN, UK AND USSR), AND SUGGESTIONS WERE MADE
FOR REDUCING THESE BY ELIMINATING SOME OF THE OBSERVA-
TIONS OR BY LIMITING THE PERIOD WHEN SHIPS WOULD BE ON

STATION. IT WAS SHOWN THAT THESE PROPOSALS WERE EITHER IMPRACTICABLE OR WOULD RESULT IN INSIGNIFICANT SAVINGS.

3. THE BUDGET FOR THE FINANCIAL PERIOD CY1977 OF 7,168,680 POUND STERLING WAS APPROVED BY A VOTE OF 12 TO 1, SWITZERLAND OPPOSING. THE SCALE OF CONTRIBUTIONS WAS ADOPTED WITH RELATIVELY LITTLE DEBATE AND ASSESSES THE FOUR MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS AS FOLLOWS: USSR 26 PERCENT, UK 19 PERCENT, FRG 18 PERCENT, FRANCE 16 PERCENT. THIS SCALE WILL ALSO BE APPLIED TO THE FIRST FINANCIAL PERIOD FROM JULY 1975 TO DECEMBER 1976, WHEN THE STATIONS WERE OPERATED UNDER INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS. ALL WMO COSTS FOR ADMINISTERING THE AGREEMENT WILL BE CHARGED TO THE CONTRACTING PARTIES AND NOT TO THE SMO BUDGET. A SMALL SECRETARIAT IS BEING ESTABLISHED TO DEAL WITH NAOS MATTERS.

4. THE BOARD ADOPTED MINOR AMENDMENTS TO THE AGREEMENT AND RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR CONDUCT OF ITS MEETINGS. ON THE WHOLE, THE SESSION WAS CONDUCTED IN A VERY BUSINESS-LIKE MANNER, MOST OF THE OPPOSITION COMING FROM THE MORE AFFLUENT STATES OF FRG AND SWITZERLAND. THERE WAS LITTLE DOUBT, HOWEVER, THAT SWITZERLAND WOULD HONOR ITS COMMITMENTS. THE USSR MAINTAINED A VERY POSITIVE ATTITUDE THROUGHOUT AND REITERATED ITS REMARKS OF EARLIER MEETINGS THAT THE BOARD SHOULD EXAMINE THE POSSIBILITIES FOR ENLARGING THE PROGRAM. IT IS CLEAR THAT THEY ARE HIGHLY PLEASED WITH THE ARRANGEMENT WHICH, IN FACT, REIMBURSES THEM FOR A PROGRAM WHICH THEY ARE ANXIOUS TO CARRY OUT IN ANY CASE. THEIR PERFORMANCE ON STATIONS DURING THE INTERIM PERIOD WAS HIGHLY UNCLASSIFIED

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SATISFACTORY. AS BEFORE, THERE WERE INFORMAL QUESTIONS REGARDING THE POSSIBILITY OF THE US JOINING THE AGREEMENT AT SOME LATER TIME, AND THE SECY GENERAL OF WMO IS URGED TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING STATES.

5. THE NEXT MEETING OF THE BOARD IS SCHEDULED FOR JULY 4, 1977, IN GENEVA.

6. COPIES OF THE FINAL REPORT ARE BEING AIRPOUCHED TO J. TREVITHICK, IO, STATE. CATTO

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